Medical Deans
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

16 November 2026

Nearly three in five newly registered doctors in 2025-26 were trained overseas

New data recently released by AHPRA shows that, for the fourth year in a row, more overseas- trained doctors were registered for the first time than Australian medical graduates. **Growth in domestic registrants has been minimal, while new registrations from doctors trained overseas have grown by 45%.**

10,248 new doctors were registered with AHPRA in 2025-26. Of these, **6,098 (59.5%) were 'international'**, meaning that they completed their medical education overseas. This is the largest incoming international cohort since Ahpra started reporting these figures in 2022-23 and continues the trend of more new doctors entering the Australian workforce being trained overseas rather than domestically.

"Australia is increasingly relying on recruiting overseas-trained doctors rather than developing a self-sufficient medical workforce," said Professor Kirsty Forrest, Medical Deans' President. "In 2022-23, we were about 50/50 in terms of domestically trained and internationally trained first-time registrants. In just four years of data, this has grown so that nearly three in five first-time registrants were trained overseas."

Australia's high reliance on overseas-trained doctors is well above the OECD average. The average proportion of the medical workforce trained overseas among the 28 OECD countries that report these data is 19.6%. In 2025, at least 31% of Australia's medical workforce was trained overseas, with 59.4% trained in Australia and no data recorded for the remaining 9.6%. Modelling by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing suggests overseas-trained doctors will represent 38% of Australia's total workforce by 2048, almost double the current OECD average. This soaring reliance on the international workforce was called out in the National Medical Workforce Strategy, in which improved domestic self-sufficiency was identified as a key outcome to ensuring the medical workforce is sustainable.

"Doctors trained overseas are an incredibly important part of the Australian medical workforce. Indeed, many regions of Australia would be without a doctor if it weren't for these highly qualified and competent doctors. However, these doctors should be a complement to domestically trained doctors to shore up fluctuations in local supply and demand, not a wholesale solution to workforce shortage," said Professor Forrest. "We need to contend with the fact that such a reliance on doctors trained overseas is not ethical over the long term and represents a risk to the availability of medical workforce to Australian communities."

Medical Deans has long been calling for strategic increases in the number of medical school places in Australia, awarded to existing schools that demonstrate innovative approaches to encouraging students into careers that will serve community needs. Medical Deans and our members urge the government to work with medical schools and sector partners along the training continuum to develop long-term strategies to increase the proportion of domestically trained doctors and realise the National Medical Workforce Strategy's vision of a more self-sufficient workforce.

**********ENDS**********

Data tables and graphs

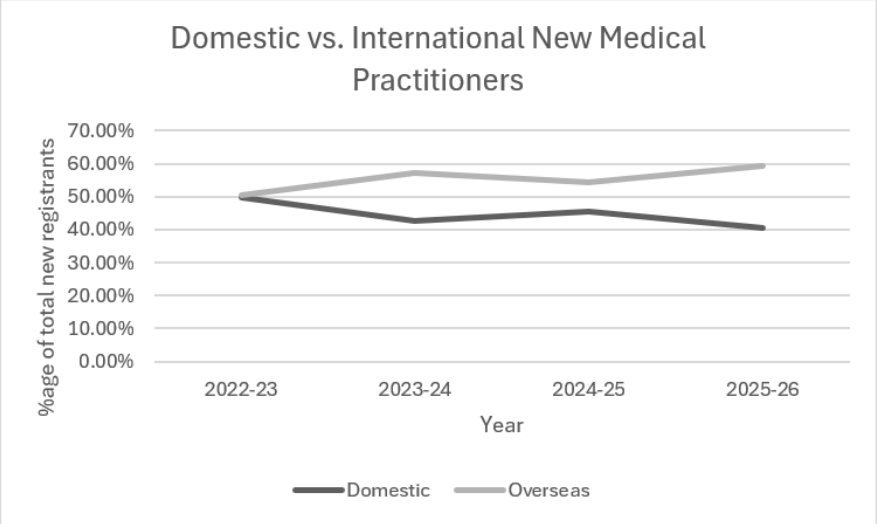
Newly registered medical practitioners by medical school location, 2022-23 to 2025-26

N	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Domestic	4146	4059	4125	4150
Overseas	4211	5431	4947	6098
TOTAL	**8357**	**9490**	**9072**	**10248**

%	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Domestic	49.61%	42.77%	45.47%	40.50%
Overseas	50.39%	57.23%	54.53%	59.50%
TOTAL	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Sources:

- AHPRA Annual Report 2025-26
- AHPRA Annual Report 2024-25
- AHPRA Annual Report 2023-24
- AHPRA Annual Report 2022-23



Domestic vs. International Total Medical Workforce, 2025

Initial Country of Qualifications	Australia	New Zealand	Other overseas	Not stated	Total
N	87,709	2,897	42,951	14,163	147,720
%	59.38%	1.96%	29.08%	9.59%	100.00%

Source: National Health Workforce Dataset

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Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Inc. represents and supports the 24 medical schools across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand in their cutting-edge medical education, work-integrated training, and research to recruit, develop and nurture outstanding medical graduates to enable our communities to continue to access world-class health services.

Medical Deans annual survey of medical graduates provides valuable information and insights on the make-up of our future doctors, including demographics, education, experience, and future career preferences.

https://medicaldeans.org.au/